

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

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LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR, SHUM, BU (MAREVA, RUMYANA AND YORDANKA)

SUBJECT: GOB STATEMENTS ON HANDING OVER MAREV PASSPORTS

REF: SOFIA 1219

1. AS NOTED REFTTEL, CONSUL WAS CALLED TO MFA AT 1030 GMT JUNE 7 TO RECEIVE PASSPORTS FOR THE TWO MAREVA CHILDREN AND THEIR AUNT, DOCHKA FILEVA ZHELEZOVA. AT THAT TIME, RELATIVELY JUNIOR MFA OFFICER MADE FOLLOWING MORE OR LESS FORMAL STATEMENT.

A. CHILDREN CONSISTENTLY HAVE BEEN OF OPINION THEY DO NOT WISH TO TRAVEL TO US TO SEE THEIR PARENTS BUT IN PAST SEVERAL DAYS GOB HAS BEEN ABLE TO CONVINCE THEM THEY SHOULD GO FOR A VISIT. CHILDREN HAVE NOW AGREED TO TRAVEL, BUT HAVE DECLARED THEY WILL REMAIN IN US FOR ONLY ONE MONTH. GOB, HAVING DONE ITS BEST TO RESOLVE THIS CASE, MUST NOW LEAVE IT TO FAMILY MEMBERS TO RESOLVE THEIR DIFFERENCES BY THEMSELVES. HOWEVER GOB WISHES CHILDREN TO HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO RETURN TO BULGARIA IF THEY DECIDE THAT IS WHAT THEY WISH TO DO.

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B. GOB EXPRESSES ITS GRATIFICATION THAT MAREVS HAVE CEASED THEIR DEMONSTRATION AND EXPRESSES APPRECIATION TO THOSE STATE DEPT AND EMBASSY OFFICERS INVOLVED. REQUESTS THAT USG DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO AVOID HAVING CHILDREN "UPSET" BY MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES. REQUESTS FURTHER THAT DEPT INFORM MAREVS OF TRAVEL PLANS OF CHILDREN AND AUNT.

C. WITH REGARD TO DCM'S EARLIER COMMENTS ABOUT INABILITY OF MRS. MAREV TO PLACE CALL TO HER MOTHER, GOB INVESTIGATION HAS REVEALED THAT CALL WAS IN FACT COMPLETED THOUGH CONNECTION WAS VERY BAD AND COMPLICATED FURTHER BY FACT THAT THE GRANDMOTHER IS HARD OF HEARING. NEVERTHELESS, GOB BELIEVES MRS. MAREV HAS MISINFORMED DEPT.

2. LAWYER FROM VARNA DISTRICT PEOPLE'S COUNCIL, WHO HAD HANDCARRIED PASSPORTS TO SOFIA, WAS PRESENT AT MEETING. HE STATED THAT DISTRICT PEOPLE'S COUNCIL HAD APPROVED PURCHASE OF FOREIGN CURRENCY FOR CHILDREN AND AUNT TO MEET INCIDENTAL EXPENSES OF TRIP, THUS FURTHER CONTINUING PRETENCE THAT CENTRAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ARE BEING RESPONSIVE TO THE WISHES EXPRESSED BY THE PEOPLE INVOLVED.

3. COMMENT: WE IMAGINE THERE IS VERY LITTLE DEPT CAN DO TO HOLD DOWN MEDIA PLAY, STILL IT MIGHT BE WELL TO ADVISE MAREVS THAT CHILDREN ARE LIKELY TO BE IN A HIGHLY NERVOUS AND EASILY UPSET STATE UPON ARRIVAL AFTER THEIR LONG TRIP, AND THE FASTER THEY ARE MOVED TO AN UNPRESSURIZED ENVIRONMENT THE BETTER. DEVOUTLY HOPE THAT AUNT WILL BE ABLE TO RETURN TO BULGARIA FULL OF FAVORABLE COMMENT ABOUT PEACE AND HARMONY IN THE MAREV HOUSEHOLD.
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